

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 6 have been amended for clarification purposes. Support for claim amendments can be found at FIG. 3. Claims 1-6 are currently pending and under consideration. Reconsideration is respectfully requested.

In the Office Action mailed March 10, 2005, the reference AG, Japanese Patent Application Laid-open No. 59-159498 was not considered by the Examiner because a translation thereof was not provided. However, the Information Disclosure Statement filed September 17, 2003 states that in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.98, a concise explanation of what is presently understood to be the relevance of each non-English language publication is set forth in the application. Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that at page 4 of the Specification, a concise explanation of what is presently understood to be the relevance of reference AG is set forth. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider this reference.

I. REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-6 UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) AS BEING ANTICIPATED BY LAMPI ET AL. (U.S. PATENT NO. 4,870,592; HEREINAFTER “LAMPI”)(previously cited):

Lampi fails to disclose “a detection unit for detecting operator’s approach to the specified apparatus including at least one apparatus which carries out operation in cooperation with the robot or operator’s entry to an off-limit region set for the specified apparatus, provided for each specified apparatus...an emergency stop unit for receiving a notice of operator’s approach or entry from the detection unit to bring the robot system into an emergency stopped state, wherein power supply to the robot and to each specified apparatus is interrupted, and a monitoring unit for each specified apparatus to monitor a connection state and an interruption state of power supply to the servomotor which drives the specified apparatus,” as recited in claim 1.

Nor does Lampi disclose “canceling the notice from the detection unit to the emergency stop unit, for the specified apparatus when the power supply is interrupted, “also recited in claim 1. That is, Lampi fails to disclose disabling a signal informing of an operator’s entry.

Instead, Lampi discloses safety techniques limiting operator access to individual machine stages for down time maintenance and to assure that robots otherwise servicing the down machine stage are excluded from that machine region (see Abstract).

Further, Lampi discloses that when a switch is actuated by an operator from within the machine stage region, then the operator has an opportunity to move the safety door or frame into an appropriate safety position (see column 15, line 62 - column 16, line 17). Further, As the

operator enters the maintenance region of the machine stage such entry will be signaled to the program controller by a floor mat switch.

Further, as pointed out by the Examiner, when the floor mat switch indicates that a man is present, and the safety switch is not selected and the safety door is open, the robot comes to an emergency stop (see steps 1214, 1220 of FIG. 35). In addition, Lampi discloses that any movement of the robot under improper control conditions toward the region being maintenance would be blocked by the safety frame, door and or barrier, such movement is detected by an impact sensor for appropriate corrective procedure (see column 16, lines 41-45). That is, in Lampi power to the robot is not interrupted. Instead, a barrier or safety frame is there to block any movement of the robot or the robot comes to an emergency stop in certain cases as mentioned above.

At page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner asserts that "parking" means to stop an energized apparatus and that "non-operational" means that something is not energized. However, the Applicants respectfully submit that the Lampi does not specifically disclose "power supply to the robot and to each specified apparatus is interrupted," as recited in claim 1. That is, a robot being in a parked state or coming to an emergency stop does not mean that the power supply to the robot is interrupted. Thus, the Applicants respectfully submit that an emergency stop is not comparable to an interruption of power supply. Thus, the Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's statement and demand the Examiner produce authority for the statement.

Accordingly, the teaching of Lampi is fundamentally different from that of the present invention.

Claims 3 and 6 recite similar features as those of amended claim 1.

Thus, although the above comments are specifically directed to claim 1, it is respectfully submitted that the comments would be helpful in understanding differences of various other rejected claims over the cited reference. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that the rejection is overcome.

III. CONCLUSION:

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that each of the claims patentably distinguishes over the prior art, and therefore, defines allowable subject matter. A prompt and favorable reconsideration of the rejection along with an indication of allowability of all pending claims are therefore respectfully requested.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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